

**In the Claims:**

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1 - 6 (Canceled)

Claim 7. (Previously presented) An extendible serving utensil for serving food at a salad bar, said extendible serving utensil comprising:

- a) a retractable tether housing member;
- b) a fixed coupling means defined by an eye with a shaft extending therefrom, and said shaft being passed through a hole in a sneeze shield extending over a salad bar for coupling said fixed coupling means to said sneeze shield, said retractable tether housing member coupled to said eye for elevating said retractable tether housing member above said salad bar;
- c) a tether member connected to said retractable tether housing member at one end thereof for retracting said tether member into said retractable tether housing member, said tether member having a free end; and
- d) a serving utensil coupled to said free end of said tether member.

Claims 8 and 9 (Canceled)

Claim 10. (Previously presented) An extendible serving utensil for serving food at a salad bar, said extendible serving utensil comprising:

- a) a retractable tether housing member;
- b) a means for coupling said retractable tether housing member to an external mounting means for elevating said retractable tether housing member above food served at a salad bar, said external mounting means defined by a base plate with a shaft extending at normal therefrom and said shaft includes a connector at a

distal end of said shaft and said retractable tether housing member is coupled to said connector at said distal end;

c) a tether member connected to said retractable tether housing member at one end thereof, for retraction of said tether member into said retractable tether housing member, said tether member having a free end; and

d) a serving utensil coupled to said free end of said tether member.

Claim 11. (Previously presented) An extendible serving utensil as in Claim 10 and in which said shaft is a two piece element with a male connector and a female connector.

Claim 12. (Previously presented) An extendible serving utensil for serving food at a salad bar, said extendible serving utensil comprising:

a) a retractable tether housing member;

b) a means for coupling said retractable tether housing member to an external mounting means for elevating said retractable tether housing member above food served at a salad bar, said external mounting means is defined by a shaft having a connector at a distal end and a clamp connector at another end, said clamp connector for securing said shaft on an edge of a pan and said retractable housing member is coupled to said connector at said distal end;

c) a tether member connected to said retractable tether housing member at one end thereof, for retraction of said tether member into said retractable tether housing member, said tether member having a free end; and

d) a serving utensil coupled to said free end of said tether member.

Claim 13.(Original) An extendible serving utensil as in Claim 12 and in which said shaft is a two piece element having a male fitting and a female fitting.

Claim 14.(Withdrawn) An improved salad bar or the like for serving food in spaced containers and having a sneeze shield extending over said spaced containers but spaced from said spaced containers, said salad bar including serving utensils for self service of food served in said spaced containers, said improvement comprising:

a) a retractable tether device having a tether means with a first end coupled to said retractable tether device and having a free end;

b) a serving utensil coupled to said free end of said tether means; and

c) said retractable tether secured to said sneeze shield.

Claim 15.(Withdrawn) An improved salad bar as in Claim 14 wherein said serving utensil is a serving spoon.

Claim 16.(Withdrawn) An improved salad bar as in Claim 14 wherein said serving utensil is a pair of tongs.

Claim 17.(Withdrawn) An improved salad bar as in Claim 14 wherein said retractable tether device is secured to an under surface of said sneeze shield by a suction cup means.

Claim 18.(Withdrawn) An improved salad bar as in Claim 14 wherein said retractable device is secured to an under side of said sneeze shield by a fixed connector means.

Claim 19.(Withdrawn) An improved salad bar or the like for serving food in spaced containers, said salad bar including serving utensils for self service of food served in said spaced containers, said improvement comprising:

a) a retractable tether device with a tether means connected to said retractable tether device at one end and said tether means having a free end coupled to a serving utensil;

b) a shaft means secured, at one end, to a container of said spaced containers and having a distal end extending above said container; and

c) said retractable tether device connected to said distal end of said shaft means.

Claim 20.(Withdrawn) An improved salad bar as in Claim 19 where said shaft means includes a base plate means at said one end for securing said shaft means vertically in said container.

Claim 21.(Withdrawn) An improved salad bar as in Claim 19 wherein said shaft means includes a clamp means at said one end for securing said shaft to said container.

Claims 22 - 24 (Canceled)

Claim 25.(Previously presented) A retractable serving utensil system for partaking food from containers on a salad bar; said retractable serving utensil system comprising;

a) a retractable tether member having an extendible, retractable tether, said tether having a first end and a free end;

b) a salad bar for supporting a container thereon and a sneeze shield over said salad bar and means for coupling said retractable tether member above

said container on said salad bar wherein said means for coupling said retractable tether member to said sneeze shield is an eye hook with a threaded shaft and said threaded shaft extends through a hole in said sneeze shield and is held in place by a threaded nut; and

c) a serving utensil member and a means for coupling said serving utensil member to said free end of said extendible, retractable tether.

Claim 26. (Previously presented) A retractable serving utensil system for partaking food from containers on a salad bar, said retractable serving utensil system comprising:

a) a retractable tether member having an extendible, retractable tether, said tether having a first end and a free end;

b) a means for elevating said retractable tether member above a container supported on a salad bar wherein said means for elevating includes a shaft having a first end and a distal end and said first end of said shaft includes a means for securing said shaft to said container supported on said salad bar and said distal end includes a means for securing said retractable tether member to said shaft; and

c) a serving utensil and a means for coupling said serving utensil to said free end of said extendible, retractable tether.

Claim 27. (Previously presented) A retractable serving utensil system for partaking food from containers on a salad bar, said retractable serving utensil system comprising:

a) a retractable tether member having an extendible, retractable tether, said tether having a first end and a free end;

b) a means for elevating said retractable tether member above a container supported on a salad bar

wherein said means for elevating includes a shaft having a first end and a distal end and said first end of said shaft includes a means for securing said shaft to said container supported on said salad bar and said distal end includes a housing for receiving and securing said retractable tether member to said shaft; and

c) a serving utensil and a means for coupling said serving utensil to said free end of said extendible, retractable tether.

Claim 28.(Original) A retractable serving utensil system as in Claim 27 and in which said housing for receiving and securing said retractable tether means includes a hole for permitting said extendible, retractable tether to extend out of said housing and said housing further includes a cover means for securing said retractable tether means in said housing.

Claim 29.(Previously presented) A retractable serving utensil system as in Claim 25 wherein said serving utensil member is a spoon.

Claim 30.(Previously presented) A retractable serving utensil system as in Claim 25 wherein said serving utensil member is a pair of tongs for serving food.

Claim 31.(Original) A retractable serving utensil system as in Claim 26 wherein said serving utensil is a spoon

Claim 32.(Previously presented) A retractable serving utensil system as in Claim 26 wherein said serving utensil is a pair of tongs for serving food.

Claim 33.(Original) A retractable serving utensil system as in Claim 27 wherein said serving utensil is a

spoon.

Claim 34. (Previously presented) A retractable serving utensil system as in Claim 27 wherein said serving utensil is a pair of tongs for serving food.